

SOPHIA'S RETURN

Healing the Grail Wound



SEREN BERTRAND

Copyright © in text 2017: Seren Bertrand and Azra Bertrand, M.D. All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

First published in the United States of America in 2016, by The Fountain of Life.
PO Box 301, Micaville, NC, 28755 www.thefountainoflife.org

Cover Design & Photo: © Azra and Seren Bertrand

All Photos © Azra and Seren Bertrand, or otherwise indicated

Design and Text Layout: Heather Skye (SacredEnchantment.com) & Rhian Tarling (tdcreativestudio.com)

All information in this text is based on the experience of the author. This information is shared with the understanding that you accept complete responsibility for your own health and wellbeing. Your body and psychology are unique; if you have experienced sexual trauma we recommend you seek professional counsel and support. The information within is not a substitute for professional health advice – and may contain triggering information or subjects. Please consult your health practitioner or a licensed therapist, and inner guidance in addition to the words presented here, particularly if you have PTSD or any other mental health issues or concerns. The author and publisher are not responsible for any adverse responses resulting from the use of any information in this text.



Table Of Contents

☉ Pele Power, Womb of the World.....	05
☉ Holy Womb Fire, Blood of the Volcano.....	06
☉ Voice of Truth and Worldwide “Me Too”.....	07
☉ The Sacred Power of Story.....	09
☉ The Sexual Shadow of Suburbia.....	10
☉ No Safe Place.....	12
☉ Pilgrim of the Grail Wound.....	14
☉ Held By The Web of Life.....	15
☉ Dark Night of the Womb.....	16
☉ Journey to the Underworld.....	17
☉ Womb of the Divine Mother.....	19
☉ Message From a Dragon-Angel.....	20
☉ Seiki Womb Breathing.....	21
☉ The Ascending Wave.....	22
☉ Womb Spirals of Remembrance.....	24
☉ Speaking the Voice of the Womb.....	25
☉ The Wound of the World.....	26
☉ The Grotto of Magdalene.....	28
☉ Interview with a Womb Vampire.....	29
☉ The Unbearable Truth.....	30
☉ Waking the Womb Oracle Within.....	32
☉ Womb Wolf – The Fierce Feminine.....	33
☉ Opening to Love Again.....	34
☉ Path of Sacred Union.....	36
☉ Healing the Father Wound.....	38
☉ Pain of the Mother Wound.....	40
☉ Return of the Feminine Christ.....	42
☉ The Original Taboo.....	44
☉ The Place of Refuge.....	45
☉ Womb of Tara – Taking Refuge.....	47
☉ The Taboo is Lifted.....	50



Mother and Child, Chalice Well, Isle of Avalon, Glastonbury

PREFACE

Pele Power, Womb Of The World

—

Something *immense* happened in 2017 when we were on retreat in Hawaii – and this volcanic lava of truth and liberation is also flowing, red hot, through the world.

During our 9-day Womb Awakening retreat dozens of women had descended into the Womb of the World to meet the truth of their personal and collective pain, awaken their fierce wisdom, and anchor an alchemical pathway of wild innocence.

Days before the retreat started, my Beloved and I were blessed with an incredible meeting with the vast primordial being – Mother Pele – in human form. Legends have recounted personal sightings of the volcanic deity, and we were honored to meet her in this way. As we were driving on the island, Pele appeared by the roadside, wearing a red dress, beckoning us with a wave, and revealing an indescribable energy transmission pouring from her beyond-human face.

Seconds later, when we turned to follow her, she had vanished.

This was a sign that Big Work was ahead. Later, after the retreat had completed, sitting in the Yoni cave of Pele in a Full Moon ceremony, a female Hawaiian Elder called a Kumu said that Pele had been waiting for us ‘before we had been born’. It was clear that this incredibly powerful Ancient Mother, one of the embodiments of the Womb of Gaia, was supporting the worldwide awakening of women’s wombs, in union with men, and the return of the deep earth-wisdom held within our bodies.

Ke akua wahine o ka pohaku ‘ena ‘ena, ‘eli ‘eli kai mai
O goddess of the Burning Stones, may wonder and awe be with me

Holy Womb Fire, Blood of the Volcano

—

At the heart of our retreat was a visit to Kilauea, the volcanic home of Pele.

On our pilgrimage to Mother Pele, I started my bloodtime. I sat and bled on the earth, watching her fiery furnace, marveling at the softness and depth of her.

I could feel a fiery lava-ladder descending down into the very center of the Earth, the womb of the world, rooting the soul of my Womb and blood to Her divine truth.

The cauldron of the Earth was alive and directly speaking to me.

Pele told me: You're too polite. Now is the time to be LOUD AND PROUD.
She said, "Women's voices need to open – and the taboos need to be broken."

In the reflection of Pele's fiery soul, I could feel how the feminine needed to activate at a new level. There wasn't enough time to be polite about it. Truth had to be told.

Answering this, CALL TO ACTION, after our retreat I compiled this candid account of my own sacred journey of healing from psychic, sexual and ritual abuse, and awakening my Womb power, which I named "Sophia's Return". Knowing that our collective healing comes from remembrance and expression, rather than denial and silence, I shared this with 200 people in our Moon College - weeks ahead of 'MeToo' - announcing that I would also be releasing this story to the public as a free e-book.

I had no idea of the vastness of the threads that were being collectively *unveiled*.



Voice of Truth and Worldwide “Me Too”

–

After our communion with Pele, other volcanoes began erupting across the world – connected by a geological phenomena known as the ‘ring of fire’ – just as a volcano was erupting in the collective psyche.

At the end of our trip, travelling home from Hawaii and on a stopover at LA airport we saw the breaking news of the Harvey Weinstein sexual abuse scandal. Names of prominent actresses, such as Angelina Jolie and Gwyneth Paltrow were flashing on screen, as they spoke out about their own experiences of sexual harassment. It was as if an invisible wall had suddenly crumbled overnight, and truth was flooding out.

Suddenly, where only 24 hours before it was considered shameful and dangerous to talk publically about experiences of rape, sexual abuse and sexual harassment – now it was pouring out of women in torrents of truth, courage and bold catharsis. The very fabric of the current world paradigm was shifting and unraveling for those who could feel the magnitude of what was happening, both literally, and energetically.

This wave of truth was flowing to heal both men and women – to support those who had been abused, and also to gracefully remove the current paradigm of ‘rape-consciousness’, of cultural co-dependence with abusers, who needed to finally face and heal their own deep inner trauma, rather than keep projecting it onto others.

Sexual abuse, incest and rape-consciousness are *the* building blocks of authoritarian, hierarchical, patriarchal power structures, keeping us trauma-bonded to a psychopathic system, which is destroying the human soul and our planet.

Its power resides in secrecy. Speaking out undoes the spell.

If you are reading this, and aware – or still unaware, but slowly remembering – that you have experienced the Grail Wound of sexual abuse, I want this to be a love note.

You are beautiful, your innocence is intact, and your journey is that of Sophia’s.

Our Womb Power births new worlds.
Shall we rebirth all this back into Love?



Pele – Goddess of Fire, © Herb Kawainui Kane

The Sacred Power of Story

I had told my story so many times, I had become tired of it.
So I folded it away in my inner sacred treasure chest.
I continued on my private healing journey, whilst also focusing on the collective.
Until Pele gave me a lava-prod to remind me, the *personal is collective*.
Stories are medicine. They need to be told. And retold.
First you tell them for your own healing. Then you share to heal others.
Ultimately, each time we share our story, everyone receives a gift.

Storytelling is the oldest of arts – it is the thread where the voice of the innerworld, the womb underworld, makes its winding progress out into the light to be birthed.
Stories have been told to keep the truth and also to restore the truth.

The returning story for our age is that of the Grail – how she was lost, how she may be found and restored, and how the wasteland will return to its lush fertility.

How can we tell our stories? How can we find our voice again?
How can our darkest wastelands be rebirthed into the light?
How can the energetic noose held around our necks be removed?
How can we find a redemption that embraces both abused and abuser?

As a cantadora, a spirit keeper of the sacred feminine stories,
I have percolated on this all my life, as I weave with words.

My creative soul is held within the wise knowing of the womb.
The womb knows when to menstruate and release the old into the new.
The womb knows when to gestate what is unripe and needs to be held safe.
The womb knows when to birth, when it is time to shine forth into the light.

Only in the union of this primordial circle lives the secret of creative power.
Dark Moon, New Moon, Full Moon. The rebirth cycle of the black-light.

Now we are in a menstrual phase of the world – a time for release and truth telling.

But it is also a sacred birthing; a time of a new light emerging.

The Sexual Shadow of Suburbia

As a young woman I was not afraid to share stories of my darkest wastelands with the world, in fact I could not keep them hidden inside. On first dates I would tell men the pain of my abuse, and bewildered, yet brave, they would hold me the best they could, as I took them on the fast train into the chaotic Underworld for a guided tour.

Often it was the women, not the men, who subtly held the vibration of “shut up”. Maybe my truth vibrated too closely with the truth hidden inside them?

I cannot remember if my abusers ever threatened me into silence. If they did, it didn't work. My instinct from an early age was to *speak out about the 'energetic elephant' in the room that everyone else was denying – the epidemic of sexual abuse.*

Back then, in the mid 80's, what I discovered was that when you spoke out, you emboldened other women to talk about their own abuse too – and suddenly a shocking, yet clear picture would emerge, about the true reality of 'sleepy suburbia'.

I first remember speaking out to a friend on our street; we must have both been about 11. I told her I 'wasn't a virgin' – because I had been abused. She took this in her stride as we walked through the neighborhood, saying she wasn't a virgin either, as the older boy who lived next door was regularly sexually abusing her. It was an innocent exchange, we didn't discuss it further or analyze it – it was almost as if we were talking about swapping stickers or some other normal childhood pursuit.

Then, one of our next-door neighbors, a woman in her forties, got entangled with a pimp – and I began dog-sitting for her, and then babysitting for his child, who had been in foster care. She was an alcoholic, and was effectively being sex trafficked by this man. Cars would turn up throughout the day and night, and she was too drunk and emotionally vulnerable to do anything but endure these pre-arranged rapes. Her husband had died suddenly a few years earlier and she had met the pimp at a singles night, where he had posed as a lonely divorcee looking for a relationship. As best I could at age 13, I tried to support her – and she called me her 'psychiatrist'.

One of my best friends was sexually assaulted in a horrific way by a group of our fellow male schoolmates, some of whom she had considered to be her 'friends'. Our art teacher had a nervous

breakdown when she had heard what they had done. This friend was also date-raped, and we went to watch the film “The Accused” about a rape victim. There we wept together in the womb-like darkness of the cinema.

I listened, and I watched people – and I could always ‘see the signs’. A girl at school, who had a reputation for sleeping around, came to school one day so drunk that she collapsed and had to be taken to hospital to have her stomach pumped. She wasn’t a friend of mine, but I went to the headmaster’s office to find her address – I said I wanted to send her a get well card. Instead, I located her address and visited her. Sitting in a council flat, watching the sunset, we held hands as she cried and told me that the neighbor was raping her every Saturday night when he babysat for her.

The next day I found a female schoolteacher, who I trusted, and told her what was happening. I was expecting to hear her outrage and her promise to do something. Instead, she shuffled some papers uncomfortably and said it was nothing to do with the school, and that it was best that I minded my own business and forgot about it.

*“In thy darkest shadow let me sit
When the grey owls about thee flit;
There will I ask of thee a boon,
That I may not faint or die or swoon.”*

- Elizabeth Siddal

No Safe Place

—

I never forgot. If this was a snapshot of what was happening inside ‘ordinary’ suburbia, and ‘normal’ schools, was there any wonder the world was so broken?

Over time, I not only told personal stories – I became a public voice for the stories of other women. I wrote about a female Tibetan refugee who was gang-raped during her three-month escape, on foot, from Tibet. In the book *No Safe Place*, I helped tell the story of a Scottish woman from a ‘middle-class’ background whose childhood experiences of sexual abuse was described by a judge as ‘the worst case he had ever heard’. I sat with women inside their ‘Dark Night of the Womb’ to bear witness.

Yet after all this ‘telling’ I knew I needed to re-establish a womb container for myself, to inhabit my own boundaries, and be able to hold energy within me.
I was gestating a Great Work of alchemical sexual healing that needed protection.

Looking around, I could see that most women had not travelled as deep inside the Womb Underworld as I had. Maybe they were not ready? I trusted the timing.
I saw women turning on each other, thrashing out this inner pain on their sisters.
I kept trusting the birth process, laying down the bread crumbs for those to come.

As I met the soft flame of Mother Pele in Hawaii, she told me: The time is now.
Here is a story I have been gestating inside me, tending with love.
I offer its medicine to you so it may bless us all with healing.

“Bone by bone, hair by hair, Wild Woman comes back. Through night dreams, through events half understood and half remembered...”

- Clarissa Pinkola Estés



Seren Bertrand – then known as ‘Amanda’ – aged 6

Pilgrim of the Grail Wound

—

From a young age I knew I had been sexually abused by a neighbor, and openly discussed it as I entered my menarche and was candid with people for many years about this part of my life, and the effects it had had on me. I had a clear conscious memory of him sexually abusing me, but no memory of either penetration, or where I had been returning from as he carried me along a back lane. I understood that many of the difficulties I had as a young woman stemmed from this sexual trauma.

Aged 13, during a visionary communion with Mary Magdalene she communicated that healing this Grail wound in myself, and others, would be the path to restoration for myself and the world – and was in fact the dark pilgrimage the Sophia had taken, as she brought all these experiences back to the frequency of innocence and love.

For days I entered a rapturous internal state where I received this vision from this living Grail called Mary Magdalene—where I was shown how embracing our Sacred Feminine wounds would lead us back to sexual and spiritual wholeness and complete a cycle of redemption.

At the time, I could only feel the vision, like a holographic dream within my psyche, making perfect non-sense. Many years later, I understood that this deep visionary experience was identical to the Gnostic accounts of Sophia's archetypal journey and mystical marriage.

Soon after this I began creating paintings of women with light shining from their wombs, or women with huge red womb spaces, with the Eye of Wisdom staring out, symbolizing the cervix as the gateway between worlds. I also painted magical trees with a womb in the center; sometimes this “tree womb” contained a baby, sometimes it was just red or a glowing portal of light – the sign of a womb shaman.

Mary Magdalene was communicating that the Womb was sacred, and the source of our healing – if we only could face the pain of the devastating wounds inside us.

“The Womb Mysteries are often symbolized by legends of a Sacred Feminine vessel that contains the essence of life, renewal, and immortality – ‘the Grail’. Carrying the mantle of Mari-Isis and the Feminine Christ, Magdalene is deeply connected to these mysterious Grail legends, speaking in hidden code of a lost feminine knowledge.”

- Womb Awakening, Seren & Azra Bertrand

Held By The Web of Life

—

Aged 21, whilst in Thailand for the summer, this pain within my Womb, expressing through my menses, was the thread that guided me into my first Womb meditation. Sitting alone on a deserted rocky beach I brought my awareness down into my Womb and breathed and opened my consciousness to the primordial elements – the pulsing, ebbing, flowing essence of the ocean waves, the gentle breeze, the warmth of the sun, and the sandy earth I was resting on, surrounded by swaying trees.

I felt the deepest sense of peace, and a rooted belonging to the realm of earth. This was a completely "in the body" satori experience through the gateway of the Womb.

In this soft, loving and deep vibration I felt a clear knowing of how my life needed to change. I had been a hedonist, trying to 'get out of my body' to find ecstasy by taking drugs, and I had also experienced eating disorders and bulimia in my quest to have the perfectly thin disassociated body, and to control the feelings of inner disgust. After this Womb Awakening, I began the slow, arduous process to come back into my body – to stop controlling my body or to try and check out with false highs.



Seren (far left) travelling in India, Nepal and Thailand aged 24

Dark Night of the Womb

Aged 24, during a visit to India I experienced the 'Dark Night of the Womb' through a powerful inner initiation with the Divine Mother's Dark Womb, Kali. During a motorcycle crash in Goa, where I was thrown off the bike, miraculously unharmed on the surface, I began to experience this inner sense of being 'shattered' and shocked, as my body began the long journey to express her distress and pain.

During this time I also spent time in the Himalayas, discovering ancient spiritual traditions. One early morning, I joined a throng of ancient-looking Tibetan women dressed in their traditional chupas, singing 'om-mani-padme-hum', as they spiraled their prayer wheels, and we all descended down the dark narrow hill towards the Dalai Lama's Temple. At the Temple we gathered inside for a long puja ceremony, permeated with the sounds of the Tibetan chanting. As the sun rose, flooding us with rays of so light, an old Tibetan woman wrapped honorific prayer scarves round an ancient looking tree, sobbing her heart out. In this prayer of the old woman and tree, I felt the tears of the Soul of the World.

Arriving back home, I experienced a physical and spiritual breakdown for 3 months. Recovering from Dengue fever, every day I lay in bed and read '*Kali - The Feminine Force*'; each morning returning to the start again. My parents were afraid – they did not want to come close to the fire of my emotional pain, hoping I could repress it and 'get back to normal.'

The next three years I was 'baked' inside this Dark Womb of dissolution and transformation, finally able to embody my pain with the support of Divine Mother.

To support myself I embarked on a course of psychotherapy with a wonderful man who held me safe, and also used artwork and dream visions as part of the process. Remembering was devastating, and at one point I was placed on 24-hour suicide watch. After a session, I recall sobbing alone on a gray London street, not knowing how I could walk home, how I could breathe, how I could live with this pain inside.

No one really spoke about sexual abuse or healing trauma back then, I had many wonderful friends, but they could not support me in this – and often they unwittingly re-enforced the feeling that I was damaged, too much, over emotional.

Journey to the Underworld

-

Following the path of Inanna, who made the initiatory descent to Earth Womb, in the culmination of this powerful and painful journey to the Underworld to meet my 'dark twin' Ereshkigal, I developed endometriosis and fibroids within my womb.

It was as if all the soulful, energetic, emotional and physical pain embedded in my Womb lining and Womb space was finally expressing – I put on weight, I experienced an incredible fatigue and exhaustion all the time, my menstruations were so intense that at times I would almost black out if I was out in public.

I felt as if the young, pretty, perfect version of myself - fairylike, angelic, the 'good girl' – was cracking open like a broken doll and the real me was emerging in all her wild pain, grief, anger and confusion. But in this death-rebirth I could also viscerally feel my deep power and inner Womb knowing activating for the first time. I was like an awakening Dragon, heavy with pain, wild womb power and soul remembering.

Aged 29, this "Dark Womb" graced me with the total rebirth as the elements of my life that had been lined up so carefully, were bowled over in one clean strike. I lost my job, my relationship ended, I was sick and I had no savings to fall back onto.

I felt as if my life had slammed into a wall and all I could do was keep in the moment, and in the body, breathing with the Shakti that was flowing through. I had no idea what would happen to me. There seemed to be no possibilities that would come. It truly felt like "The End" – but in fact, I would crawl through a mystical wormhole – a womhole - into an entirely different dimension of life and being, and be reborn.

"The faith and the love are all in the waiting. Wait without thought, for you are not ready for thought: So the darkness shall be the light, and the stillness the dancing."

- TS Eliot



Angel, Basilique Notre-Dame de Marceille , Limoux, France

Womb of the Divine Mother

As I unraveled, I felt held completely safe within the Womb of the Divine Mother. As everything was crumbling around me I began to experience union with the vast, interconnected flow of life, and my body-soul began to open into liberation.

At first I sought help with doctors, but then I decided to discontinue medical treatment for my endometriosis and fibroids, and also declined the invitation to “have a hysterectomy” because the doctors told me, flippantly, that I would probably never be able to have children anyway. So why not just get rid of the Womb? Instinctively I knew my Womb had a soul, and she was not a piece of ‘trash’ to throw away. I felt clearly that all my pain *and* all my power and treasure was living within my Womb, and that the Divine Mother and Divine Feminine were living *inside of me*.

This knowing sustained me as I kept coming back to the Voice within my Womb.

I connected my Womb back to the moon cycles with conscious menstruation, used healing herbs, essential oils, and nutritional cleansing, and prayed with all my heart to the Divine Mother as I chanted the simple prayer, *Om Sri Devi Ma*, in Her honor.

I began to feel a cosmic kinship with the Divine Mother, and I knew that there was a deep purpose for my life, and that even in my suffering, my sacred feminine power was not diminished – and in fact, her fires were burning with an amazing velocity.

My Womb was waking up to her incredible power.

“Within you is a womb shaman who holds the sacred blueprints of creation. Your hidden feminine essence transmits the untamed spirals of the primordial life force, Shakti, initiating others into the mystery of life. She is emerging from a long slumber. Can you feel her energy pulsing inside? She has been sleeping on primeval forest floors, steeped in fertile soils, flowing in crystal-clear rivers.”

- Seren & Azra Bertrand, Womb Awakening

Message From a Dragon-Angel

—

During this time, two blessings came to help me navigate this intense soul rebirthing. One day as I was walking home, on a dark rainy night, so exhausted I felt that I was dragging my feet through treacle, a voice inside told me to turn and walk inside a bookshop. I was grateful for the warmth and comfort inside the shop, but it precipitated a feeling breaking over me like a tidal wave: I could no longer carry on.

I considered just laying down on the floor and curling up in a tight ball.

The womb voice within me spoke again, encouraging me, telling me to keep going – and directed me to a specific book held on one of the many bookshelves. It was the *Ayurvedic Book of Women's Healing* by Bri Maya Tiwari, a Vedic nun who had healed herself of terminal ovarian cancer at the age of 23 by using ancient womb wisdom.

As I lifted the book off the shelf, a loud voice seemed to boom from inside me, saying “one day you will also have a book published”. It seemed very unlikely to me, and I looked around wondering if anyone else had heard this booming voice, but everyone was going about their business as normal. I felt like an Angel had spoken just to me.

I walked out of the shop feeling uplifted, and reading the powerful story of Bri Maya Tiwari and her beautiful instruction on the ancient feminine path of womb healing spoke directly to my feminine soul, giving me the courage to trust what was unfolding inside me. It was as if various fragments of ancient priestess soul memory suddenly lined up and ‘landed’ inside me. I *knew* what to do as I consciously began Womb Awakening– allowing the Divine Mother, the Ancient Mothers, the Moon cycles and my own Womb knowing to be the ‘soul star’ of my spiritual journey.

“There is a brokenness out of which comes the unbroken. There is a shatteredness out of which blooms the unshatterable. There is a sorrow beyond all grief, which leads to joy. And a fragility out of whose depths emerges strength. There is a hollow space too vast for words through which we pass with each loss, out of whose darkness we are sanctioned into being”

- The poetess Rashani, quoted by Maya Tiwari

Seiki Womb Breathing

—

Around the same time as my diagnosis of endometriosis I was commissioned to write a piece on a little-known Japanese healing art called Seiki-Soho, which had been birthed by the Japanese Master Sensei Akinobu Kishi and taught with his wife Kyoko Kishi. I visited one of his senior students in London for my first taste of this subtle and revolutionary healing art, and fell in love with the energy it awakened.

When Kishi visited London, I attended one of his in-person workshops. In front of the group I explained that I had endometriosis, which was a condition of the Womb. Understanding that my Womb was out of balance, with his magical hands, Kishi began to uncoil the sleeping serpent of Seiki – *living energy* - inside me, as if he were a snake charmer. Suddenly my Womb began to pulse and breathe with life again.

It was as if something inside me, buried under a deep ocean, had dramatically surfaced from my womb and taken a huge in-breath as a newborn baby might. *My womb was breathing*. I felt delirious with joy – something essential to my very feminine soul, which had been stolen from me, was now returned. I was alive again.

Kishi explained that there was an imbalance in my pelvis, which was causing a block in the flow of energy. I knew my pelvic chalice was the record-keeper of my abuse.

Despite all the pain I had found in the Underworld, I had also discovered my true soul self and begun a beautiful conversation and relationship with what lay within.

*Heart-centred fullness
Brings a feeling of Cradling
It lets ki from heaven pass through you
Drawing out disharmony
Reborn through touch*

- By Akinobu Kishi

The Ascending Wave

My thirtieth birthday became a portal to a new life, as I moved back home to my parents, and began working more deeply with my ancestral and parental imprints. Although I had no money, I decided to only follow the path of my heart. I told Divine Mother I would be a writer and nothing else. I began to write a novel on the split within the feminine, and the danger of cutting the heart from deep womb power.

I also began to write a book on womb healing, gathering all of the spiritual, emotional, energetic and physical tools I had been using in my own womb healing.

After writing almost 40,000 words I planned to move to the ocean, complete the book and open my own womb healing and awakening practice for other women.

Yet life had other plans for me, and an unexpected and exciting opportunity came up for me to work as an editor on a national women's magazine, which I felt called to accept. The next five years were a whirl of hard work, creative initiation, success, achievement and the "ascending" energy of doing, creating, expanding, and learning.

I was still devoted to the spiritual path of Shakti, deeply connected to Divine Mother and my womb healing, and practiced Seiki almost every day. I frequently pilgrimaged to India, studying with teachers, visiting the Golden Temple, and visiting various Shakti peethas and Kali Temples – including the beautiful Chamunda Devi temple, which became my spiritual 'home' and source of inspiration.

Yet one day, after a powerful puja with Dooninath Babaji, an old Saivite Sadhu who lived in a remote ashram at the foothills of the Himalayas, a deep river of sorrow and unworthiness emerged. It was as if my deep feminine soul had been turned inside out, and a raw, old pain was now exposed to the dazzling light.

My Womb was still weeping inside with her untold stories.



Seren at the Chamunda Devi Temple, Chamba, Himalayas.

An ancient Goddess Temple dedicated to Chamunda Devi – the aspect of Kali that is a “demon slayer” - Seren experienced a powerful initiation inside the sacred “Womb Cave” hidden away inside the Temple, which is likely a site of ancient worship.

Starr Goode, author of “Sheela Na Gig – The Dark Goddess of Sacred Power”, describes the mysterious power of the temple this way: “Similar to....the Sheela Na Gig, Chamunda Mata....displays her greatest source of power – her vulva.”

Womb Spirals of Remembrance

—

My womb had completely healed from fibroids through my womb healing practices, and my endometriosis was soothed – menstruation was now orgasmic not painful.

Life was full and rich in many ways, and many of the painful patterns of the past had transformed – I no longer experienced chronic fear, anxiety, panic, shame or lack, but still the black panther eyes of the shadow realms called to me from the deep.

Romantic relationships and intimacy were difficult for me, and my sexuality was often sublimated into spiritual ideals and practices directed at the pure white river.

Although I followed the Path of Shakti, the teachers were mostly men, and the cosmologies, teachings and practices more male-oriented. Devotion to the Womb of the Divine Mother and the Goddess did not extend down to the womb of the human woman. Sexuality, menstruation, romantic love, womb awakening, were still ‘taboo’.

My own Womb was telling me to descend down into the wild earth and root, but the external world only reflected a path that encouraged ascending away from my body.

My desire to experience my own embodied sensuality, and a deeply connected, healthy, loving relationship, that was a sacred union of spiritual initiation and transformation, became a key to meet the next stage of my feminine soul retrieval.

Once again, I reached out for support and mentorship to help me navigate down into the deeper realms of my own psyche and the soul of the world. An amazing psychic lady, with wild red hair down to her waist stepped into my life, and the next door opened. Merging energy work with deep soul healing I began my next healing spiral.

I *thought* I had completed my healing work with my sexual abuse wounds, after almost 15 years of diving deep into these shadows to consciously feel and heal them. But as we descended down, I realized that in many ways I had only just begun.

Speaking the Voice of the Womb

–

At eight years old I had told my parents about the abuse I had experienced. I was scared, my Yoni was hurting, I bled when I went to the toilet. I had intense insomnia, and often called for my dad in the night to search the house for imaginary intruders. My parents decided to hush it up, and brush it under the carpet – ‘for my sake’.

Through most of my healing journey I had not spoken to my parents about the past or how the sexual abuse had affected me. After our initial conversations, it became a “taboo” subject. Now, working through the next layer of pain, my inner little girl was asking: “why did you not protect me?” I could feel the silence resounding like tall walls inside my heart.

Summoning all my courage, I travelled back home to say the unspoken words and have “the talk”. I discovered that saying things out loud made them intensely, and uncomfortably real. Speaking the truth of my feelings and experience seemed to rip through the veils and illusions of the ‘perfect family’ I had been holding together. It was like watching parts of me splinter into a terrifying and unexpected fragility.

Mirrored back to me was my mother’s own fear and fragility, her own confusion and pain – I discovered there was no “adult” in the room to mediate and witness my experience and catharsis, only two broken little girls held inside women’s bodies. Our pain was shared and only I had the capacity to carry it onto the cross of rebirth.

Following this I journeyed into a powerful soul initiation as I woke up into a newly raw, glittering landscape of *reality*, difficult to put into words, painful and intense, yet exhilarating with the power of truth. I knew that I had only lived on the surface of my own self before, and that there were entire soul worlds still left to discover.

I was drunk with an ecstatic wine of self-love – sipped from the cauldron of Baba Yaga. This was a self-love that did not need to be special or good, only true and real.

I wanted to know *more*, to feel *more*, to explore the soul’s ‘unknown unknown’.

Every gateway I passed through seemed to be the trip wire for the next initiation. It was as if the Divine Mother was leading me into a deep, dark labyrinth.

The Wound of the World

—

I was now hungry for truth, a deeper truth, of a wound that was entwined around the root of the world, around the root of the womb, slowly choking her to death. During this time I visited David Icke at his home in the Isle of Wight – I was prepared to consider and contemplate anything and everything in my Grail quest.

I allowed myself to journey down every forbidden pathway of possibility, into the most fantastical and devastating lost histories and herstories of the world. I percolated everything, allowing it all to move through me, without needing anything to be absolutely true or right. I discovered that just as I had pieced together a threadbare illusion about my family, so had I crafted a beautiful lie about our world.

Everything I had hung my identity on now hung precariously in the wind. The theatre backdrop was slowly being pulled back to reveal something astounding. Although there was great horror in this revealing, there was also a profound relief. That deep, lurking sense that something was not right with the world was made conscious at last – I no longer had to pretend that if I conformed it would all be ok.

*“Deep into that darkness peering,
Long I stood there,
Wondering, fearing, doubting,
Dreaming dreams no mortal
Ever dared to dream before.”*

- Edgar Allen Poe





Beloved Mary, Church of Mary Magdalene, Rennes Les Chateau, France

Grotto of Mary Magdalene

—

Paradoxically, as I dived into this forbidden shadow world – my own personal world felt simpler, more beautiful, as the light of true innocence was returning back.

I had studied and travelled deeply within the Shakti traditions of India, but now the powerful presence of the Black Madonna and Mary Magdalene called me back onto the Rose Path I had first been initiated into at the age of thirteen during my vision.

Following the call, I pilgrimaged to Marseilles to commune with the Black Madonna, and offer a three-foot statue of the Goddess Kali into the womb waters of the harbor.

I contemplated how even the ‘forbidden histories,’ mostly elucidated by men who were not connected to their bodies or to Mother Earth, were often another vehicle to demonize the Goddesses and the ancient feminine traditions that were once sacred to the female shamans, medicine women, and priestesses of past times.

It seemed there was an endless array of ways for men to ‘burn’ the wise witches, and the traditions they followed, demonizing the Divine Mother who birthed us.

Knowing that I was going beyond anything written in this world, I made my way on a solitary pilgrimage to St Baume, sacred site of Mary Magdalene to ask the ancient memory of the land, and the feminine Holy Spirit herself to assist and guide me.

I discovered the answers were engraved in the sacred grotto of Earth herself.

A shadow had passed across the feminine that was so immense; it would take everything and then a bit more to face it, let alone move through and heal it.

I vowed to give it everything anyway.

Interview With a Womb Vampire

My first spirals of womb healing and awakening had restored the health, wellbeing and spiritual sanctity of my Womb and feminine soul – eventually leading to a three- year period of conscious celibacy to allow myself to establish my womb sovereignty again, and to experience a wild love affair with the awakening of my own energy.

Now the quest was, how to integrate this with sexuality and relationship?

I was inspired by the great love of Mary Magdalene and Yeshua, and the purity of how they had woven together heaven and earth in their sacred sexual relationship.

I was unaware of any shadow of ‘sacred’ sexuality. But I was about to meet it.

During this time, through a connection at a local yoga center, I was introduced to the work of a male teacher who claimed to work with sacred feminine healing. I had pilgrimaged alone for so long on this path, I felt called to travel now in a community.

From the start, there were so many shadows around this person that my Womb instinct was flashing a red light, yet the presence of a group of vibrant, powerful and authentic women around him assuaged my fears and doubts, and lured me in. This was to be a deeper initiation into to the Shadow Sister and Mother Wound.

Although there was genuine sincerity, commitment and friendship, underneath the surface of empowered womanhood and sacred sisterhood, was also a shadow realm of wounded little girls in adult bodies, vying for the attention and approval of the abusive daddy. I also met my own wounded, broken little girl in this hall of mirrors.

It was also difficult for me to believe or understand the astounding capacity of the male psychopathic character structure to lie, manipulate, create false glammers, behave with absolute immorality and lack of empathy, to weave grandiose fantasy with pearls of truth, and to radiate out a potent and seductive charismatic presence.

Immediately, the gateways to the deeper shadow world began to yawn open.

The Unbearable Truth

-

Aware that my sexuality was still blocked, I began to pray to the Divine Mother for her assistance – to help me see what was unseen, to feel what was unthinkable.

After a deep meditation and prayer session I had a snapshot flashback of a childhood memory – a large house, in a field beyond the back lane. I ‘saw’ myself as a young girl of six, dressed up in a pretty party dress, with my mother inside the house. Then I saw another memory of my dad walking me down to the house. In my conscious memory I had never been to this house, nor had my parents.

I asked my parents if they had ever been to this house, or remembered taking me there. They said no. Their only comment was that celebrities and rich people visited the house; they remembered Rolls Royce’s and Mercedes driving down the lane.

I was perplexed and decided to do some research on the house.

As I was researching the house, a deep womb instinct made me type in the words ‘ritual abuse’ – a phrase I was vaguely aware of, but had no real idea what it meant. When the search results came back I felt sick, my head was swirling, as if I was melting, and I quickly switched the computer off, with my heart pounding.

But I was through the gateway, and as I had promised, I would go there.

For the next year I lived this promise of fierce love for myself.
I explored, I prayed, I felt, I grieved, I awakened, *and I trusted love.*





Seren, in a mystical Grail Church in the village of Bugarach, France

Waking the Womb Oracle Within

—

My inner descent into “hell” was also reflected in the outer world.

Slowly, I also began to live out an unconscious recapitulation of sexual and psychic abuse with the male teacher I had become entwined with, in a terrifying catharsis.

Afterwards, when I confronted him about his abusive behavior by email, he replied to say that I had wanted it, that he had “helped me”; he used skillful manipulation to blame and belittle me, trying to cut me down to a size where he could tower over me in his false power. He used my experiences of sexual abuse as a child to shame me.

Here was the “false prophet” psyche laid bare – a man completely armored with arrogance and spiritual aggression, shielded from his own emotions and conscience.

This was the soul-deadened building block the false matrix was built from.

Yet, the most difficult journey was to find my own anger and boundaries. Because, in the long, dark nights, I could only ask myself what had happened to him?

Weeping for my own inner child, I could not help but weep for his too.

At this point I only had my Womb’s ‘say so’ that I was processing not only a profound personal wound, but a fundamental wound of the world – based on the abuse of sex and power, called ‘ritual abuse’, that had stemmed from ancient mystery schools when entire sects of priest/esses had turned to the dark side.

I trusted my Womb, yet what I was being shown seemed unlikely and unconceivable. I was from an ordinary town, and ordinary background. Like all children, I had been fed endless “fairytales” of the perfection of my own childhood. Yes, there was sexual abuse – but it was as if a thick suburban curtain had been pulled over it, minimizing it, making it appear random, isolated, buried ‘in the past’.

But years later, a national scandal revealed that a high-level pedophile network had been operating in this seemingly normal, respectable world of my childhood.

The inner Womb Oracle knows....

Womb Wolf – The Fierce Feminine

–

My breakthrough came in the dreamtime, after I had offered prayers to Inanna. I awoke, whilst still asleep, into a vividly lucid dreamstate; everything around me was pulsing with an infinite, velvet blackness like a never-ending Womb. I was in the Void. From the center of the Void I began to see an owl emerge with its back to me. Its presence was astounding, uncanny, shimmering with life-force and revelation.

I became aware, or was made aware, that the Owl would soon begin turning to face me and that if I looked into the black-shimmering mirror of her eyes I would be awakened into a level of truth and consciousness that would involve an immense death and rebirth of who I ‘thought’ I was and what I ‘thought’ the world was.

I was utterly terrified, trembling, trying to awaken from the dream – but as she turned, her eyes were like black holes, and I found a deep place within me was magnetized to look. I can never share what I saw there, but I hope one day you see.

The very next morning, so many illusions fell away effortlessly. I had seen many, many layers of the world, and the collective world soul and forbidden history, as you might look into a holographic, cosmic crystal ball – it was beyond thinking or words.

I instantly saw through the tawdry mind control games of the spiritual abuser and left his sphere of influence, feeling the wild fire of my true Shakti ignite again.

My Womb and the Cosmic Womb were re-united.

“Philosophy, as the thought of the world, does not appear until reality has completed its formative process, and made itself ready. The owl of Minerva takes its flight only as the dusk begins to fall”

- Hegel

Opening to Love Again

–

As I hit the bottom of the Underworld, skidding – an incredible doorway of light began to open up inside me, and a rich, lustrous Divine Love began to pour through.

I was pulsing with the beauty of an astounding love for the world, including the Grail wound, and all those who had both experienced and perpetrated this ancient wound, dating back to the fall of the ancient mystery schools and feminine ways.

My Womb was on fire with a soft power of devotion and dedication to the return of love and the restoration of the true feminine teachings birthed from the Womb.

As the doorway of light opened, my Beloved also stepped through. We had known each other for a few years, but it was as if our eyes had suddenly opened – and we could *see each other at last*. It was a simple, instant, innocent, irrevocable love.

I had descended down to such a forsaken place within myself and the world that I had feared that I would be totally annihilated, destroyed, and dismembered and left for dead – and yet suddenly I was being ‘re-membered’ into the web of infinite love.

The profound wound of the feminine, that I – like so many others – had experienced was placed at the center of our spiritual altar. We held it with an extravagant love; with tenderness; with kindness; with understanding. We were not here to ‘fix it’. We were here to see it, to listen to it, to honor the depths of its journey; to truly love it.

From this place of union and devotion to each other and to the love within all beings, we began to experience a vast remembering of cosmic womb wisdom, as we recount in the book *Womb Awakening – Initiatory Wisdom from the Creatrix of All Life*.

The Divine Mother was with me, and in fact had never once left my side.
The Ancient Mothers were in Circle around me.
The Dakinis were dancing inside me.
The Magdalene was guiding me.

My Womb had awakened.
I had been destined to descend
And remember.



Sacred Marriage of Seren and Azra Bertrand, Cae Mabon, Wales, 2012

Path of Sacred Union

—

In the safe container of Sacred Union, my next spiral of healing began.

Again I experienced the humbling knowing that we are always arriving at the beginning. As soon as we step foot into our next initiation we are babes again.

Being held by an authentic, loving, mature man who had balanced power with love was a revelation. This love was kind, gentle, present, unwavering, and embracing.

Within the arms of the true sacred masculine, I began to feel safe enough to cognitively piece together the waves of spiritual initiation I had just lived through.

I asked myself the question – what had drawn this to me?

I felt as if I had viscerally lived through the fall of Atlantis and the Wound of the Witches, with this vampiric priest archetype – the inquisitor... and the Dark Father.

Looking around me, I could see how this archetypal energy – embodied in men with psychopathic character structures and some spiritual flair – abounded in the world. Stories of abuse, manipulation, rape, coercion, psychic invasion were rife everywhere. Women, in looking for their healing, were meeting their abuser again. And no one could say anything or speak out as the conspiracy of silence continued. It was as if we still had our tongues cut out from past times and our hands tied.

All around me, in private, stories of terrible abuse abounded. But nothing was said in public, or if it was it was quickly swept away, often by shame or legal threats.

Deeper yet, were the profound levels of sexual, psychic and ritual abuse, prevalent across many cultures, dating back thousands of years, still shrouded in silence. Our priestesshoods had been decimated, enslaved, used, abused, and discarded.

Yet from the Grail Wound of the world, we were rising again.

Remembering, restoring, re-storying.

Opening our hearts once more.

Flinging open the Temple doors - to let love in.

I had also touched upon a wild erotic power within me, my 'red river' of Shakti, which seemed to be trauma-bonded to an abusive energy that channeled through a heartless masculine who wanted to own, take, control and use this feminine power. I knew I had to reclaim this Red River, with love, in the temple of true Sacred Union.

I knew that we had to build the new *Temples of the Mother* – and initiate the healing. No matter what fear I had, this desire, this knowing, was a million times stronger.



Grail Rose – Mary of Bethany, St Martins-on-the-Hill, Scarborough

Healing the Father Wound

—

It was obvious, yet horrifying, to deduce that I had journeyed through the core Father Wound – the all-powerful, brilliant, god-like man (as he appears to a little girl), who is also the angry, punishing, abuser, consumed by his own soul wounds.

How can a young girl resolve this immense split in her family psyche?

By falling for the man who is her savior and abuser wrapped up in one.

This little girl, always ‘looking up to’, needed to root down into her womanhood.

I began to look towards the father who had tucked me up into bed at night, bought me cuddly toys, searched the house for intruders, and been my soul protector.

I tentatively, with much fear and dread, dipped my toes in the Underworld again.

Was this place fathomless and bottomless? Would this ever end?

The memories started to return through dreams and body memories.

This was no longer an emotional, psychological or energetic process.

This was bone-deep physical cellular memory and soul retrieval from hell.

An immense, seemingly infinite, blackness yawned out in front of me.

I would wake up at night screaming in terror, as my Beloved held me until the sun rose. A profound dread, filled with unutterable doom, pervaded my whole being.

If cars drove past on the nearby road I would have a full-body, shaking trauma meltdown, as if these cars were full of the men, here to rape me, in my own bed.

Step by step, held in the safety of the true masculine, I remembered – and I survived.

In the dreamtime I encountered my father, trying to pass off his own guilt onto me – shaming me, blaming me, telling me I was the one who was “bad and wrong”. With dragon flames I told him I no longer accepted the burden of his guilt. I was innocent.

I also prayed fervently for him, and for all my abusers, asking the Divine Mother to hold them. I knew that in some cosmic way our redemption was now entangled.

But my responsibility was to heal myself, and to give the rest over to God/dess.



Mary Magdalene and Anointing Chalice, stained glass window

The Pain of the Mother Wound

—

During this process my father passed away, and I journeyed with him in spirit world as he travelled through bardo realms and healed his own wounds.

I was with him in spirit world as ‘spirit animals’ tore away at the flesh of his emotional armoring and denial, stripping him down to his bare soul, in a shamanic death. I received his messages from the other side as he finally reached nirvana.

Eventually I allowed myself to feel both my deep pain and my deep love for him.

Was this not the source of my grief – that this great love had totally betrayed me?

How ancient was this core wound? When had the agony of this betrayal begun?

I discovered there is an unremembered gateway in the heart of the Womb, which can hold the remembrance of the pain and suffering and still allow the deep love.

We do not have to choose between the innocence of love or the wisdom of knowing.

Underneath the carnage of the father wound is also the sharp cut of the mother wound. My little girl cried out – “Where were you mom?” “Why didn’t you help me?”

I journeyed with, and grieved for, and raged over, all the women down this long line who had never been able to break the chain, or end the silent collusion.

I felt the deathly pressure round my neck, not to tell, not to break the spell.

I felt the immense pain of women’s repression of truth and what they had sacrificed in order to forget – how they had buried their own soul in their need to feel safe.

I wept for all the women, still held in the prison of their own father wound, who unknowingly support abusers, even promoting them as the ‘savior’ of the feminine.

I wept for the part of me that still cried out for the mother trapped in toxic denial. I sat in sober silence, as I saw the patterns in me that were coded to ‘keep quiet’.

The silence of shame and denial in the feminine is a frozen river of hate and envy. Only love can allow this river to flow again – a love that is drenched in wisdom, a love that dares to tell the truth at last, and boldly protect the sons and daughters of earth.



Black Madonna – Notre Dame de Montserrat

Return of the Feminine Christ

—

Healing the Grail Wound – in all its many aspects – is the work of the Feminine Christ, which is an energetic council of Ancient Mothers across many lineages.

We do not have to walk this path alone. Mary Magdalene is one of the female Spirit Guides of the Grail Wound healing, alongside her Tibetan counterpart, yogini and dakini, Yeshe Tsogyal. These are women who in their lifetime experienced the Grail Wound, and journeyed to the heart of it to redeem and awaken their Womb.

Mary Magdalene experienced sexual and psychic ritual abuse as she studied in the Egyptian temples with the fallen priestly elites, and her journey of remembrance and healing was one of the keys that allowed the initiation of Yeshua into the feminine. Mary Magdalene appears to all those – no matter what culture – who begin to travel into the Grail Wound and walk the heroine's path of Sophia's Return.

Yeshe Tsogyal, the visionary womb shaman and spiritual mother of Tibetan Buddhism, was gang-raped in her own lifetime – and through her womb-mercy granted Womb Enlightenment to her assailants, reminding them that the pure light of the feminine cannot be touched, broken or taken. Her Womb was Divine.

In this lineage of the Feminine Christ, the Womb Awakening work is held.

“As the true feminine takes her rightful place in union with the true masculine, an incredible power is born. The light of creation formed by the union of man and woman will suddenly turn on. It is a creative force more powerful than any other frequency we have known on this planet. It brings with it a deep connection to the web of life.”

- Seren & Azra Bertrand, Womb Awakening





Seren, travelling in India, with her soul-sister, Kunga Lhamo –

This picture is taken at the Dalai Lama's temple in McLeod Ganj in the Himalayas on "Losar" the Tibetan new year, just before a ritual circumambulation of the Temple to begin the formal celebratory ceremony.

"The Buddhist Magdalene, Yeshe Tsyogal, was the lineage holder of a primordial tradition of female shaman priestesses, birthing the teachings that went on to become Tibetan Buddhism. Her name translates as the "Primordial (ye) Wisdom (shes) Queen (rgyal mo) of the Lake (tso)."

- Seren & Azra Bertrand, Womb Awakening

The Original Taboo

-

In Hawaii, on our Womb Awakening teacher training, I discovered that the Polynesian word 'taboo' is expressed as 'kapu' in Hawaii, meaning 'wrong', 'to trespass', 'forbidden' and 'keep out'. Ka Pu also means sacred, or 'womb power'.

As we prepared for our sacred Womb gathering, our attention was drawn time and time again to the paradoxical history of the sacred lands of Hawaii. It was clear that a forbidden Womb Power, held deep in the memory of the land, was awakening.

Although the tribes of Hawaii were peaceful inhabitants of a consciousness of 'Aloha' (love) for thousands of years, by 1200CE there had been invasions of a people who were more warlike, with priesthoods who practiced human sacrifice. This was an archetypal story, of an Eden of original innocence – sometimes called Lemuria or 'Mu' – which had been invaded and destroyed, with its sacred ways lost.

Hundreds of years ago, the people of Hawaii were often put to death by these warrior priesthoods for breaking their 'kapu' laws – often for simple mistakes or transgressions, such as stepping in the shadow of a chief, or eating the wrong foods.

In some legends, the original 'kapu' laws began by forbidding men and women from eating together, so that the chief did not have to eat with his wife, and could sneak off to commit incest with his daughter. The original trespass on the sacred womb.

Eventually, the 'kapu' laws - with their extreme punishments of death - were lifted by a Hawaiian Queen, who sought protection for women, who were often the victims. Sadly, the island's spiritual legacy was next uprooted by Christianity.



The Place of Refuge

Yet even in the darkest times, when the fear of this sacrificial consciousness reigned, there was always one safe place to go – a sacred site called the ‘Place of Refuge’. Pu’honua O Hōnaunau in Hawaiian – which translates as, ‘place of the sacred pregnant earth’. A Womb chakra, or ‘navel-of-the-world’ site.

If a person could swim to this sacred site, next to an ancient royal sanctuary, and enter through the sacred tidal pools, they could be absolved of their death sentence.

On a spiritual level, this was a place of refuge from the patriarchy....

As I was being called to write this account of my journey of healing sexual abuse, it was no coincidence that we were staying right next to this sacred Place of Refuge.

Every day we would swim and commune in the sacred tidal pools, and in the evening watch the sun set in silence, peaceful with prayers and meditations.

From our sense, this beautiful sacred site was a shimmering remnant of Lemurian consciousness - coded with the knowledge of the ancient Womb Mystery schools. We could vision women pilgrimaging to this magical coastline to give birth in the shallow, warm, tidal pools, and in our psychic ‘womb-eye’ we saw priestess-midwives, ancient Crones, womb shamans, medicine women and star walkers.

On the island there still remains a stone carving which is the equivalent of the Celtic Sheela-na-gig – where a female womb shaman exposes her vulva in sacred blessing.

One day, we felt the dimensions merge, and an old Crone Priestess came to meet us. She confirmed that this place had once been a sacred feminine mystery site, and that even the incoming patriarchy had been afraid to overrule its power of sanctuary.

Now, with gentle and ancient wisdom, this Hawaiian medicine woman reminded me of this ‘Place of Refuge’ – held within an ancient lineage of wise women, and within the womb-memory of all women.

During our Full Moon ritual, in the womb cave of Pele, the Kumu explained that in past times men had been barred from entering this sacred Yoni cave – but that now ‘the kapu was lifted’. Men were allowed back inside the sacred womb space to remember who they were. The Womb of Pele was about to initiate the masculine, and invoke a new cycle of healing.



Place of Refuge, nr Captain Cook, Big Island, Hawaii

Womb of Tara – Taking Refuge

–

In Buddhism there is a concept of ‘taking refuge’ – a soul sanctuary where we can heal, remember, and we can once again become One with original consciousness.

This Place of Refuge is the Womb of Creation, which is within us, and inside Earth.

It is easy to become overwhelmed by the magnitude of the abuse we have experienced, and all the ways the feminine soul of our Womb has been dishonored. During our descents we can begin to identify with the abuse, as if *we are that*. But we are not that – we are something vast, indestructible, beautiful, and innocent. Abuse is an experience we journey through, but it is not the essence of *who we are*.

Womb Awakening is a sacred pilgrimage to open into the beauty of our true essence. From this expanded, yet deeply intimate place of connection, we can heal our pain.

On our first night in the sacred lands of Hawaii, I asked for a dream-vision. With respect and honor I spoke to the Spirit of the Land, and the Ancestors of the land. I asked them to communicate any wisdom messages that might guide our stay.

Naturally, I expected to commune with the indigenous Hawaiian ancestors.

Instead, to my surprise, I was visited by the Tibetan Khandros – indigenous Womb Shamans and Dakinis of the pre-patriarchal Himalayan sacred feminine traditions.

The dream begins as I am shopping for red bindis, with a Tibetan woman running the stall. This woman has the face of a dear friend, Kunga, but in the dream I am also aware that the true identity of this woman is Yeshe Tsogyal, a Dakini and the spiritual mother of Tibetan Buddhism. Her face is full of joy, warmth and kindness.

I place a red bindi, for feminine power, on my forehead, and pick up a red jewel necklace. The Dakini leans in and says, “Why don’t you take this from Tara?”

She points to a beautiful shimmering small white postcard of Tara, with a flower of life mandala and diamonds sparkling at every node point. It is female iconography and also a Diamond Womb – the Womb of Tara, Celestial Womb, Womb of Creation – which holds the sacred geometry of the universe in a bejeweled web structure.

The Dakini also holds a silverwork figure of Tara over the card to buy with it; it is sparkling silver with diamond lights and is beautiful. The Dakini is abundant and laughing, saying it is very 'starry', very 'starry' - she is laughing with wild bliss.

Om Tare Tuttare Ture Soha

*"Homage to you whose face is like
One hundred autumn moons gathered
And blazes with the dazzling light
Of a thousand constellations."*

21 praises of Tara, translated by Thubten Chodron

Tara is Mother of all Buddhas – the goddess of liberation, wisdom and compassion.

The name Tara (Drolma in Tibetan) means both 'Star' and 'Saviouress'. She is said to have emerged from the primordial oceans, like Aphrodite. In the Polynesian myths of Hawaii, Tara is also revered as a sea goddess, the dragon mother of the oceans.

The oldest reference to the goddess Tara comes from the ancient sagas of Finland, at least 5,000 years old, which speak of a group known as Tar, the Women of Wisdom.

In ancient Celtic lore, Tara is the name of the Mother Goddess, and in Ireland the Hill of Tara is the sacred mound, which seats the Kings. In Latin the name for Tara is Terra, mother earth herself. In the Middle-East Tara is known as the goddess Ishtar. In Native American traditions, the goddess Tara is known as Star Woman.

My sacred womb name, Seren, is also an old Welsh druid word for Star.

As the female Buddha, Tara vows:

*"There are many who wish to gain enlightenment
in a man's form,
And there are few who wish to work
for the welfare of living beings
in a female form.*

*Therefore may I, in a female body,
work for the welfare of all beings,
until such time as all humanity has found its fullness."*



Seren in a sacred forest of the Cherokee lands, Appalachia, USA – 2017

*“By healing the Wombs of women, so will we heal the physical and spiritual wasteland—
and the sacred rivers of the feminine will flow, and redeem, again.
This is our restoration to wholeness, and the work of the feminine Christ.
Womb Awakening is a true revolution, and it starts right here inside of you.”*

- Womb Awakening, by Seren & Azra Bertrand

The Taboo Is Lifted

-

I percolated on this dream – and its message and meaning for our Womb gathering.

On the morning of our Tibetan Womb Pulsing practice, as I was introducing the lineage holder Yeshe Tsogyal, and telling her treasure-tale of overcoming rape through the redemptive power of Womb Consciousness, the ‘penny dropped’.

In the dream, the face of Yeshe Tsogyal – who had been gang-raped during her time travelling around Tibet – had been given as a woman who in this lifetime had also been gang-raped whilst escaping from Tibet, and whose story I had written about.

My Tibetan soul-sister, in some mysterious way, was an emanation of this Dakini.

I was bathed in the joy and warmth of this lineage of sacred women, threading down the timelines, until the present day, in a direct transmission of womb wisdom.

I could feel their Womb-Bliss calling out to me – and calling out to all of us.

This celestial diamond light lives within our Wombs - always untouched and pristine.

Can you feel it sparkling?

Can you feel the beauty of this Womb-Light?

Can you feel its desire to awaken and shine out?

At the height of the “MeToo” wave that swept the world, I had a vivid dream of an incredible, undulating White Snake with piercing eyes - she told me she was the Soul of the World. She said she wasn’t dying, but that she was *coming alive*.

We have lived under too many ‘taboos’ for far too long.

It is time for our forbidden womb power to speak out.

It is time to remove the taboos and let life flow again.

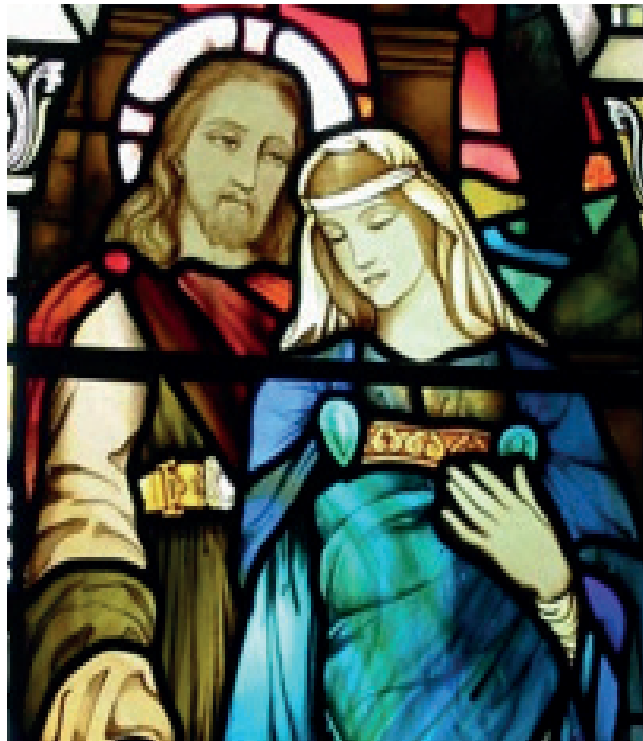
It is time to heal our Wombs and awaken once again.

I share this story to tell you that I have journeyed to the Underworld Womb, and to let you know that what you will find there is the innocent power of your own light.

It is safe to remember. It is time.

A Circle of love holds you.

**By Seren Bertrand, co-founder of the Fountain of Life Feminine Mystery School,
Co-author of *Womb Awakening: Initiatory Wisdom of the Creatrix of all Life*.**



Mary Magdalene and Yeshua, Isle of Mull, Scotland

The Fountain Of Life

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

SEREN BERTRAND and her beloved husband, DR AZRA BERTRAND, MD, are evolutionary enchanters, experimental mystics and guides, dedicated to helping women awaken their womb power and to assisting the rebirth of the masculine into his true gifts, uniting them in sacred union. They facilitate international retreats and apprenticeships on Womb Awakening, sacred union, and the return of the feminine dimension, for men and women.



Through their Grail mystery school, the Fountain of Life, their Womb Awakening teachings have spanned the globe to over twenty countries, touching many thousands of people and inspiring a worldwide remembrance of Womb Consciousness.

Seren and Azra live in the ancient Mother Mountains of Appalachia, with their two cat-guides Merlin and Lyra, and devote their lives to opening deeper into union and love. The journey of sacred marriage and intimate relationship is their greatest teacher, and fills them with joy and divine purpose.

To join one of their Womb Awakening online courses, apprenticeships, or retreats, or to buy their Sacred Sounds of the Womb or Gateway of the Mother CD's, please visit their websites: www.thefountainoflife.org and www.wombawakening.com

Their revolutionary book 'Womb Awakening – Initiatory Wisdom From the Creatrix of All Life', is praised as a 'revelation, a masterpiece, to be read for generations to come.'

Available online at Amazon and innertraditions.com and in all good bookstores

To get in touch please email us at: contact@thefountainoflife.org

www.thefountainoflife.org and www.wombawakening.com



Mary with her hands in the traditional “Womb Shaman” mudra of the ancient Yogini and Dakini lineages. St Marie Cathedral, Sheffield